

January 9, 1998

VPCD-98-01 (LDV/LDT/SM/ICI/LIMO)

Dear Manufacturer:

SUBJECT: Use of GF-2 Oils for 1999 and Later Model Years

As explained in the enclosed letter, EPA is approving the use of GF-2 oils in EPA certification and fuel economy vehicles with a maximum fuel economy improvement factor of 0.6% for 10W-30 oil and 1.2% for 5W-30 oil, based on the ASTM Sequence VIA test. EPA encourages manufacturers to recommend the use of GF-2 oils because of the obvious fuel economy benefits and also because of the emissions benefits resulting from the reduced phosphorus levels in this class of oils.

Regarding the use of 5W-30 oils, data indicate that when performing oil changes, vehicle owners and the service industry do not appear to be following manufacturers' recommendations to use 5W-30 oils (where appropriate). It appears that 10W-30 and 10W-40 oils are commonly used, even though the vehicle owners manual recommends the use of 5W-30 oils. We encourage any efforts by the auto industry which will result in more use of 5W-30 oils. Perhaps outreach efforts would be beneficial to your customers, to automotive service trade journals and to petroleum industry trade journals.

EPA approval to use GF-2 oil in test vehicles is based on manufacturers adherence to the three conditions outlined in the enclosed letter.

If you have any questions about this letter, please contact your certification team representative.

Sincerely,

Jane Armstrong, Director
Vehicle Programs and Compliance Division
Office of Mobile Sources

Enclosure

November 4, 1997

Mr. James P, Steiger, Director
Fuels & Lubricants Department
American Automobile Manufacturers Association
7430 Second Ave., Suite 300
Detroit, MI 48202

Dear Mr. Steiger:

SUBJECT: Use of GF-2 Oils for 1999 Model Year and Beyond

EPA approved the conditional use of GF-2 energy conserving oils in my May 15, 1996 guidance letter (VPCD-96-06) for the 1997 and 1998 model years based on initial data and the hope of a successful introduction of the new GF-2 oil category. In that letter, we indicated that the underlying data should be reviewed and the maximum fuel efficiency factor allowable for certification testing updated once actual usage data became available. Based on the data you summarized in your September 11, 1997 letter, we have sufficient information to update the fuel economy improvement maximums and extend our approval to use GF-2 oils to future model years.

Your data, shows a market share weighted average fuel economy improvement of 1.18% for 5W-30 and 0.60% for 10W-30 GF-2 oils. Based on our established fuel efficient oil policy (summarized in the attachments to Robert Maxwell's guidance letter dated September 12, 1988, CD-88-15), manufacturers must select an oil to use during emission and fuel economy testing which is no greater than the market share weighted average fuel economy improvement factor.

Although we approve your request to extend our approval for use of GF-2 oils beyond the 1998 model year, we cannot accept your suggestion to keep the interim maximum fuel economy improvement factors in place. Your data clearly shows that these initial figures were too high, these initial values exceed the levels of all oil manufacturers surveyed except one.

In addition to being appropriate, the new maximum fuel economy improvement factors approved in this letter allow significant choice in oil manufacturers to run testing. Seven of the twelve

-----ENCLOSURE TO VPCD-98-01-----

oil manufacturers (representing over 60% of the market volume) produce oils which do not exceed the market average fuel economy improvement and are eligible for use in test vehicles.

EPA approval of GF-2 oil is conditioned upon manufacturer adherence to the following practices:

1. The manufacturer clearly recommends the use of GF-2 oil as the preferred oil in its owners manual instructions. EPA encourages manufacturers to identify the recommended service, viscosity, and energy conserving classifications on the oil filler cap or other appropriate location on the vehicle. EPA also encourages manufacturers to recommend that consumers look for the sunburst or certification mark on the engine oil they purchase.

2. Manufacturers must use the approved oil in certification and fuel economy test vehicles. EPA approves use of oil with improvement factors not greater than 1.18% for 5W-30 oil and 0.60% for 10W-30.

3. Manufacturers use oil that has a fuel efficiency that is greater than or equal to the GF-2 oil used during testing as the factory fill.

If you have any questions on this matter, please contact Eldert Bontekoe at (313) 668-4442.

Sincerely,

Original Signed by:

Jane Armstrong, Director
Vehicle Programs and Compliance Division
Office of Mobile Sources